

Press release: Students showcase new skills at Highways England charitable event

A team of four Highways England staff is supporting the Brimsham Green School students as part of a programme focused on turning the students' fundraising ideas into a reality while completing personal challenges to develop their confidence, teamwork and resilience.

The students planned the a cake sale and a static bike race at a fundraising event, as well as making a presentation on their charitable efforts to a group of Highways England staff.

Student Harry Shearwood, aged 14, said:

This has been a really good way to raise money for a smaller charity and it would be great to do something like this again.

The mentors from Highways England have helped us with everything from planning and organising the event to our presentation skills and it's given us more confidence.

A few months ago I couldn't have imagined doing a presentation but because we were talked through what we needed to do and given tips on what to say it was much easier. Our people skills have improved a lot too.

Highways England mentor Desiree Li said:

We are very focused on helping young people to improve their skills and confidence so that they can see their potential, and this mentoring scheme is a great way of doing that while promoting Highways England as a great place to work.

Watching the young people develop from their initial shyness and lack of confidence to presenting to a group of colleagues is amazing and will have a lasting benefit for them. They develop a clear sense of their potential and the skills that they can offer their community.

This is the second year Highways England has supported the project. Staff were so positive about coaching a team of young people last year that this year we have two teams of mentors taking part.

Run by local youth charity Envision and backed by the Careers and Enterprise

Company, the 10-week Community Apprentice programme sets young people the challenge of making a difference in the community.

Brimsham Green School careers co-ordinator, Maria Filer, said:

We are delighted with how much the pupils have progressed during the programme. There have been some big changes in individual pupils and how the group has worked together as a whole.

The skills that Envision and Highways England mentors have helped to develop has raised their confidence, their skills level and given them an opportunity to raise money for a charity they feel strongly about.

The Brimsham Green team is in competition with other local schools and mentors are also in competition with those from other local businesses, as well as a second Highways England team based at Brunel House, Aztec West which is supporting Bradley Stoke Community School.

During December the project will culminate in a Boardroom challenge where students will present their achievements to a group of local business leaders and an overall winner will be announced.

Bristol charity Nilaari, which provides culturally appropriate services for young people and adults with mental health or addiction issues and preventing reoffending, will benefit from the fundraising efforts of Brimsham Green School.

The Envision fundraising day follows an event in the summer when the Highways England Regional Operations Centre at Avonmouth hosted its first school open day in a bid to inspire the next generation of transport professionals.

Around 24 year 6 pupils, aged 10 and 11, from Bristol inner city primary school, St Werburgh's, joined traffic officers, engineers and managers for a comprehensive tour of the ROC as well as taking part in business skills workshops and hearing about career options with Highways England.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.